'INDIAN EDUCATION: Everyone's Concern'

Malcolm A. Saulis, Chairman
July, 1984

PROVINCE OF NEW BRUNSWICK
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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'INDIAN EDUCATION: Everyone's Concern'

A report compiled by the Minister's study group on Indian Education in the Province of New Brunswick.

Illustrations: Roger Simon, Big Cove Reserve

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

As a Study Group we would be remiss if we did not acknowledge and express our appreciation to the Indian people who spent time with us, during the course of our study. The openness, candor, and genuine feelings of sharing were ever present.

It is because of this that high hopes can be expressed and sought after through the findings of this study. A wish too for future mutual communications through an ongoing exchange.

M.A.S.

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INDIAN EDUCATION: EVERYONE'S CONCERN

INTRODUCTION

One of the major findings of the Committee is that, in many cases, the twin problems of academic and social adjustment of Indian students to public schools are not as great as they were five to ten years ago. However, this improvement is by no means uniform throughout the Province. Several bands feel that the situation has not improved. Interestingly, this feeling was usually expressed by the largest bands. In addition, the results of the comparison of CTBS scores done by the Department of Education, as well as retention rate data, indicate that in general the achievement levels of Indian children still lag behind that of the population at large.

In some cases, bands have taken an active role in the education of their children, through education committees and/or increased parental contact with the schools, and some school districts have been particularly responsive to the difficulties faced by Indian students. However, in general, there is a lack of any framework to provide support, encouragement, direction and follow-up for specific initiatives. This absence of a provincial framework has meant that local initiatives have been fragmented, taking place in an isolated, uncoordinated fashion, or in other cases, local initiatives have not taken place for lack of support and encouragement or they have 'died' after the first encounter with failure.

It should be noted that with the recent filling of the position of Indian Education Consultant, more attention has been given to this area. There remains a need, however, for the articulation of objectives and the establishment of a framework to pursue them.

This framework involves joint action on the part of the schools and the Indian Bands; planning, support and monitoring at the provincial level; and an improved relationship between the reserves and the public schools. The following chapters make recommendations on a number of specific matters that should be addressed in a comprehensive coordinated manner within this framework. In this way the recommendations become mutually reinforcing and the benefits to be derived will increase dramatically.

The effectiveness of any process of change is incumbent on three things being present:

1) a sharing of a single-mindedness of purpose on the need for change;
2) a mutual desire to achieve an end;
3) a cooperative effort.

This is what this report attempts to do in a positive way: to deliver the message that things have changed, that there is a need for more change, and that new initiatives can be achieved.

The report has been conscious of the bottom line for all of this change, that being the Indian student in the school system. Whether this is a federal or provincial system, they are the ones in need of support services.

Section 1
"Study Process"

I Had To Quit
AT Grade 8 because
I had To support
My FamiLy. IT
was hard iN Those
Days

Study Process

The following is the strategy employed in the course of this study:

- Phase 1: the examination, by members of the study group, of the factors associated with achievement levels of students in the school system.
- Phase 2: the visiting of the reserves across the province and the holding of meetings with the Chiefs and Councils, and other people, concerning education at the band level, and about education in general.

During Phase 1 a two-day session was held where each of the study group members presented what they felt were the pertinent factors involved in the achievement of any child in school. The group considered many factors from the various viewpoints of the people involved.

In Appendix "A" is the list of study group members as well as the agencies they represent. It is fair to assume that each person could present a different perspective to the problem. During the course of discussions the specific relationship of these factors to the Indian child was made. Each person was asked to be on the committee, to provide either a professional view, or a view based on experiences that they had had with the Indian child or his/her community.

During phase 2 letters were sent to all of the band Chiefs and Councils, inviting them to participate in the study and to inform us as to the times, dates, and people they would want the study group to meet. There was an optional idea of a public meeting to provide for general community input. Follow-up calls were made to confirm dates and times of the meetings. These meetings were felt to be of the utmost importance, in order to 1) collect and collate ideas, 2) solidify the nature of the final report i.e.: the study's validity, 3) insure that the views reflected in the findings and recommendations of the study addressed real needs.

Additional meetings were held by the study group itself to reflect on the nature of the hearings, to share views and notes, and to reach consensus on the final report structure.

FAILDED
EXAM
FAILED

Section 2
Factors Associated with Achievement

Factors associated with achievement of children in school

Factor 'A' - Intelligence (Measurable)

Intelligence is commonly viewed as one of the key determinants of the capacity a person possesses to understand and integrate the work he/she is faced with. If one does not have the innate intelligence required to achieve at a high level, there is little that can be done to increase the intelligence required. It is possible through testing to measure this innate intelligence in children and to assist them in reaching their maximum level of performance.

Indian children have a broad range of abilities like other children. They tend, however, generally to score better on the nonverbal part of intelligence tests than the verbal part. Since a child's performance in the classroom is directly related to verbal ability, it is obvious that Indian children generally are at a disadvantage.

Indian children, therefore, have to be assisted in raising their level of verbal ability or we have to teach these children recognizing their nonverbal learning style. If this is not done, the result is a child who is not achieving and who has a very poor self-concept.

The teachers who work with these children find it confusing as well, because they realize that the Indian child definitely has intelligence and yet cannot seem to grasp the written or spoken word. This lack of verbal ability does not seem to be consistent with an intelligent child, so the teacher becomes frustrated and inefficient at helping the child to learn.

These teachers need assistance from a variety of support services to help them understand the child better and develop teaching strategies that will work effectively with these Indian children.

Factor 'B' - Performance

Performance as a factor is viewed in the light of exhibiting competence in a certain subject area, as indicated in classroom interaction and on tests of material covered. The students fail in spite of or apart from the fact that they hold measurable ability to comprehend the work they are involved in. As a result of this we find many Indian students in lower level classes i.e. level 3 and 4. There is little alternative to those involved but to place these students in these levels which serves to limit the child's choice in post-secondary endeavours.

Clearly if the students have the innate ability to do the work with which they are presented, or to work at a higher level, there must be other factors involved. Some of these factors may be as follows:

1 - Inconsistent effort
2 - Unfamiliarity with words or lack of competence in the language
3 - Effects of peer group interaction (student perception of acceptance)
4 - Teachers' expectation

1 - **Inconsistent effort** - as a factor this would indicate that the students just have not 'taken the time' to solve or attempt to comprehend the problem before them. The students have simply given up on the problem, and if they had taken time they might have been able to formulate the solution.

As a factor this would indicate that the students can demonstrate the ability to solve or comprehend the task before them, and on the next occasion or in the midst of the present task, fail to complete or follow through on the task. This inconsistent effort meets with mixed results, and thus a mixed educational experience for the children.

2 - **Unfamiliarity of words or lack of competence in the language** - as a factor this would serve to enlighten us as to the reason for the failure of the child to perform (pass on tests). This may have a cumulative base. The child may over a period of time be able to demonstrate adequate performance, and then in higher grades to show limited ability. If for example the child has, up to grade seven (7) shown adequate work, and then fails in grade seven (7), it may be due to a deteriorating

comprehension of language skills since grade four (4). For the Indian children this is a very real consideration, even though they may not be proficient in their own native language. The fact that their environments conflict along linguistic lines, may hinder their personal resolution of the language dilemma.

3 - Effects of Peer Group Interaction - Peer group interaction for the Indian children in the public school system may carry a new significance, especially in the transfer between the on-reserve and off-reserve situation; In effect, a transfer from a majority to a minority position.

Some of the potential benefits and/or drawbacks to this significant intergroup interaction may be:

1. This peer group interaction may be the support that the child needs in order to face the challenges of the school and its system, should family support not be present.
2. There is a readily identifiable group of people that the child can relate to, complete with a unique language and group situation.
3. Such close group interaction may undermine the individual initiative and success in the system. This may impact on the individual child's goal setting and future planning.
4. The group 'tightness' may set new standards for the members of the group, in terms of acceptable levels of achievement. Thus, subtly and inadvertently living up to the 'marginal expectation' set for Indian students by some educators, and by some Indian leaders as well. This creates and upholds the culture of the dropout syndrome.
5. Students who fail in school and have influence over group standards will develop the benefits of education. This influences even successful students to re-examine the 'actual benefits' of going to school. Does it help get jobs? Does one make more money? Are there educated Indians on welfare?
6. The close group reinforces differences between Indian students and other students. This has a tendency to cloud the similarities between their home communities and other communities. Such views of differences would reinforce feelings of not belonging to the school system when in fact many children feel the same anxiety and doubt that Indian children do.

The Indian child becomes preoccupied with the issues of the group. His/her focus becomes that of the group and as the individuality disappears there is a new dedication toward the groupness. There is a physical and emotional investment in the socialization process. The student may, as a result, if this preoccupation with differences persists, begin to experience difficulty in school.

If however, the group is close and supportive and generally its members doing well, the student may feel a new sense of direction and purpose. They may attempt to do better and to go further, and to share that experience with others.

The sense that you do not go to school for your own benefit but rather for others, is common still among Indian students. Their sense of community and of joint purpose is one of prevalent dynamics that guides the Indian child.

4 - Teachers' Expectations - Nearly all Indian people agree that if significant change in the education status of Indian children is to occur, instruction programs must be made relevant and meaningful to Indian learners, not only as individuals but also as members of unique social, cultural and political entities.

In 1973 Joy Hanley stated that 'the public schools are still assuming that they are teaching children that have come out of middle-class white homes. Teachers don't realize that there is a cultural difference and that there should be special programs to teach Indians what they need to succeed in society and to build self-confidence and self-image'. She also suggested that public schools are designed to build the self-image of Anglo-children and that minority children, particularly Indian, feel inferior in a structure that provides little or no support for their self-image.

Many teachers have expressed concern about what is happening in the classroom indicating that Indian students are falling behind in the third and fourth grade and that

many must repeat grades more than once. To help Indians overcome problems associated with education, poverty and lack of employment, many believe that schools must reorient and redesign programs focused on the Indian child. They insist it is not enough to give Indian pupils 'equal educational opportunity' because many Indian children cannot effectively utilize that opportunity as it is now structured. Opening schools to them does not help if the program is not flexible enough to meet their needs. Quality education must include strong counselling programs, school interaction with the parents and the home situation, and curricular options that permit the Indian child to maintain tribal traditions and cultures.

Factor 'C' - Home and family life

Home is not just a place in which to live, it is a complex and dynamic milieu, where interpersonal relationships exist. It is therefore, the most important place and collection of people we will ever know and experience.

Home becomes the environment in which our development begins. It is the place where our initial needs are met, in the four (4) areas;

1. social
2. emotional
3. physical
4. intellectual

This developmental process is common to all people, regardless of background, heritage, or any other social factor. The impact of the home milieu is also the same, in that it imparts to the individual a sense of belonging and identity. For a child this fact is especially important, in that the importance of early experiences in the home shape the child for a lifetime. These 'growth experiences' will determine the developmental pattern that the child will go through. It will determine whether growth (development) is continuous in the four areas, or at different stages in different areas. A child may show maturity physically but be emotionally immature. Intellectual development may be affected by physical development, for example.

The world around us becomes more complex as time goes by. The demands on people become greater as they get older, other people and society expect certain behaviors as people get older. This point is true in all of the developmental areas. The quality of the interactions in our first environment then becomes crucial so that we all as individuals can meet these social demands, no one is excluded since we are social beings.

Socialization - we invest a great deal of time and effort into becoming similar to other people. To be like our family, to be like others in our community, to be like others we see away from home, or on T.V. We measure our adequacy by comparing ourselves to others, and in being sensitive to how others see us. This investment and sensitivity for all intents and purposes is the process of socialization. We take on the characteristic considered appropriate by others, to be our own. We emulate and internalize the views, values and attitudes, we see in others. We alter our own images of ourselves in favor of those we see in the larger world around us. For Indian children this is an especially important point, since the importance of their community and its views, overrides their own individual views. Belongingness for Indian children is a sensitive point, and can determine how well they adjust to their new school environments. If they sense they do not belong they may turn away, or perform poorly.

Parenting and values education - one of the basic assumptions that all societies make is, that somehow parents know and are able to carry out the task of raising children; that somehow magically they can anticipate and meet the needs of growing and developing children. This at best is an unfair assumption, since no one is born knowing how to meet all of the needs of children. Yet this becomes for the parents and family the most important function. They become the method and instrument of the child's learning of family life. The implication of course, is that if one is parented inadequately the chances are great that he or she will parent poorly as well.

Parenting is more than just providing shelter, clothing, and food, it is the setting of examples of appropriate behaviors, it is the forming of attitudes, it is the teaching of values. It is the provision of models for children.

Family - what are the commonly held values attributed to the family? And what are the implications for the child in school?

The commonly held values of the family are:

1. an undeniable sense of being loved and accepted, commonly understood as unconditional love;
2. that one has an easily identifiable group of people who will support him no matter what situation he finds himself in;
3. that there is a safe secure environment to which you belong, and to where you can return when you feel threatened or insecure.

If the above circumstances do not exist or are not provided then the child's development is in jeopardy. His/her development can be halted or regress, until such time as a nuturing environment is experienced by the child.

The consequence then of an insecure or unstable home environment, and of strained emotional family ties, is one's own insecurity. The child is not sure of himself, does not interact well with others, has difficulty concentrating on his work, and will give up over a period of time in such an environment. The child will give up on many things: on himself, on his studies, and on future aspirations.

The strength of Indian families is that they are in communities with a strong sense of belonging which are generally supportive of education and of its benefits to the individual. Such strong communities, however, inhibit individual success rather they support the success of the whole community, and so the child is caught in a dilemma. How do I go ahead and succeed, when the community does not support my success? The parents and family are caught in a dilemma as well, in that they want their child to succeed and yet they love and belong to their communities. The individual then turns to the much larger and less directive community for direction in this highly personal decision.

For the Indian children who are experiencing difficulty in the education system, getting and continuing on in education becomes very much of an individual process. They become the 'individual' in the system painted into a corner by the system, the unsupportive family, and themselves. In many instances the family feels inadequate and unskilled to help their child in the system, so they display a great deal of trust in the system and its teachers to provide the child with all he/she needs.

It has become quite clear that a majority of Indian children who drop out of school do so at the junior high school level. This level provides the most challenges for any maturing child, it is a crisis time in life. It is also the level at which the school system provides little in guidance and counselling supports. For those who get through this level there seems to be a good chance of success; those who do not seem to fall into a waste land of reentry into the system and drop out again. They cannot take advantage of 'mature' courses offered elsewhere and so idle away the days and months on reserve.

Factor 'D' - The school system

The school system in New Brunswick as in every other province in Canada, has the mandate to provide or make available the resources for students to receive an education. Some of these resources include buildings, books, transportation, teaching and support staff, and reference materials. The parents are obliged by law to present their children for attendance. The process of education is a complicated mix of these resources, with the ultimate goal of meeting the learning needs of children. The resources required change correspondingly with the higher grade levels. The effectiveness of the process becomes a reciprocal responsibility between the system and the pupil. Ultimately the system's goal is translated into the interaction between the teacher and the student in the classroom.

The complex interaction between the student and teacher is made up of the creating of a routine, the development of a teaching plan, and the work in the classroom. The establishment of an environment for learning demonstrates the teachers' creativity and sensitivity to students learning needs and differences.

As time passes the routine unfolds, and the teachers establish a relationship with their pupils. They develop an understanding of the students as individuals and their response to the learning environment. Initial impressions on the part of the participants are either reinforced or changed. The potential of the students is recognized and a more individualized routine is created but not undermining the larger routine. This personalization of the educational experience enriches the learning process for the student, and serves to encourage the student to work to his/her potential.

For the child who experiences the routine in the public shcool, change becomes a normal part of the process. New teachers, new classes, new schools, and this change add to the overall excitement of the learning process.

However, many Indian children are faced with two real dilemmas:

a. change from one school system to another,
b. change from majority to minority situation.

They become both numerically and culturally a minority. Along with the changes they face, this new situation and adaptation to it take on a new importance. The teachers of these children have to realize how important first impressions must be to this new minority. These new changes do not enliven the educational experience, rather they serve to add trepidation for the child. The Indian student carries with him/her such baggage as:

1. community attitude toward education,
2. family views on education,
3. personal experiences in education, both good and bad,
4. historic relationship between native and non-native communities,
5. the history of peer group successes in education.

The public school system's ability to respond to these students is diminished. Rather the assumption is made that the native students are as aware as any other students, of the routine expectations made upon students by the school system. The lack of awareness on the part of school teachers and administrators of the history of education on reserves, and of the nature of the native communities, serves to inhibit responsiveness. Prejudice and discrimination could then be interpreted by the student and their communities based on this unresponsiveness, when in fact it may be due to a lack of dialogue by both sides. This lack of communication leads to a lack of single-mindedness of purpose in Indian education, which is needed to insure a greater degree of success by Indian students. There must be dialogue between the Indian leaders and educational authorities.

RESERVE RESIDENTS
WELCOME
SCHOOL-BOARD OFFICIALS

Section 3
Points of Interface

GUIDANCE
SOCIAL WORK

Points of interface between the Native Community and the Education System.

The following is a list of the points of interface between the native community and the education system. This will indicate that for a majority of Indian students there is interaction between two main systems, the federal and the public schools. The federal schools are traditionally funded by the Department of Indian Affairs, and the public system, by the New Brunswick Department of Education, through a general tuition agreement between the two levels of government.

1. Department of Indian Affairs
2. Children in schools
3. Community education committees
4. N.B. Department of Education
5. School Board appointees
6. Federal Provincial Advisory committee
7. Education liaison - Union of N.B. Indians
8. School Board advisory committees on Indian education, in various areas
9. Indian Education Workers
10. 'Native specific' programs at post-secondary institutions

The Department of Indian Affairs has the legislated mandate to provide educational services to Indian people throughout Canada. This occurs at on-reserve schools, or through tuition arrangements with nearby public schools.

The Indian children are obviously the front line contact between native communities and the school system. In several Indian communities across New Brunswick there are active community Education Committees, which consider the educational needs of Indian children. The concerns they address range from the resolving of day-to-day problems such as attendance, to administrative concerns of school boards, such as classroom space and ancillary services. Generally these are unpaid, volunteer positions, involving people with genuine educational concerns.

The New Brunswick Department of Education has a general tuition agreement with the Department of Indian Affairs. This provides for the payment of a fixed tuition amount for each Indian child, and includes contribution to the Provincial Government for additional costs in administration and services for inclusion of Indian children in the public school system. The agreement provides for the provision of ancillary services for the benefit of Indian children, in the public school system. Some of these are Education Workers, Consultant in Education, Curriculum Development Committees, and other development programs such as tutoring services and historical research.

Under the provisions of the master agreement there is a Federal/Provincial Advisory Committee, which oversees the matters pertaining to and arising out of the agreement. This committee is made up of two Chiefs from the Union of N.B. Indians, one each from the federal and provincial governments, with one of the Chiefs being the chairman. This committee is presently under review.

The Department of Education as well, appoints Indian school members to school boards where there is a significant number of Indian children. These are made at the same time as school board elections in the province, and are made by the Minister of Education.

Some of the school districts in the province have Indian Education Advisory Committees, to help advise and consider educational concerns of Indian students. They are traditionally made up of teachers, Indian people, principals, school board staff, and the Superintendent of Schools for the district.

The Indian Education Worker program provides for the placement of Indian paraprofessionals in schools where Indian children attend. Their prime role is to be available to meet the students' needs on a day-to-day basis in the schools. They are also expected to be an on-site resource to school staff, for parents needing advice or

information, and to the native communities for collaboration. In their paraprofessional capacity they serve as a liaison between the native population and the school system. They are also proving to be of the greatest benefit in keeping Indian children in schools, and in seeing them through troubled times. The role models they provide serve to make the native community visible in the school, since there are few Indian teachers in the public school system. This program is funded by the ancillary services budget of the general tuition agreement, and has proven to be a most worthwhile investment.

In New Brunswick, as in other provinces, there are at the present time many more Indian students in various post-secondary institutions than at any other time. Most students pride themselves on being accepted for admission through normal academic standing. There have been recently two major endeavours to reach out to the native communities and provide for development in particular areas and individuals who otherwise would not experience post secondary education. These include a Bachelor of Education Program at the University of New Brunswick, and The Certificate of Social Work, at Saint Thomas University. Both have proven very successful at meeting professional training needs outside of the normal university programs. These two programs have been careful to maintain academic quality and standards in their respective training. They have chosen to build in supports rather than compromise academic quality.

Section 4
Visits to Reserves - Points Made & Concerns Expressed

Visits to the reserves

These visits to the reserves served as Phase 2 of our process. The reserves were contacted to establish meeting times and places, as well as, to determine who would attend the meetings. There were no fixed agendas or predetermined questions by the study group. Rather the people we met during the course of our meetings spoke on what they felt were appropriate and important issues.

Usually people were present who had been involved in the addressing of educational concerns. (Appendix 'B' will provide a list of times and places of meetings held.) In a number of cases the Chief or his councillors of the reserve were present. The study group was received very warmly during the course of its visits, and this added to the overall meaningful nature of the discussions. No one appeared hesitant or disconcerted while the meetings were taking place, so all issues brought up were discussed openly.

The following will be a presentation of the points made during the meetings, and a corresponding list of concerns expressed in relation to education.

'Points made'

Need for community control of problem resolutions since it has been the feeling among Indian people that other people, other than themselves, were determining how problems affecting them would be resolved.

Not enough parental support for children attending school.

Need to reemphasize the importance of parents in the education system.

That community based education committees are effective only because the people involved are from the community, and are actively out there doing something.

That there is a lot of community concern about education, and community problems, but parents do not want to say anything about these.

Education is a top priority on reserves and in homes.

Integration without assimilation, integration in order to achieve and to reap the normal benefits of education. But that they are citizens-plus in Canada.

Would like to see a natural learning process.

That career choice has to be well considered and achieved without special consideration, in order to be meaningful.

There is a need for the Chief and Council to actively support and speak out on behalf of the importance of education.

That there is 'closet discrimination', that discriminatory treatment of Indian children is present among educators, but that it is not too widespread.

That there is a failure of the system to reach out to the native community.

That kids suffer a Cultural shock when they enter the public school system, no matter what grade level.

Since the Indian Education Worker program was instituted the dropout rate has diminished greatly, this because of an Indian presence in the school system.

That social problems play the greatest part in Indian kids not achieving in school.

Native families have historically not gotten too involved in the Education process. They have shown great respect and trust in the education system to meet the needs of their children in school.

Parents for the most part are fearful of going to the school, as they do not know the teachers.

The quality of the relationship between the Reserves and the School Districts varies greatly.

That the transition hits Indian students moving from the small friendly Federal school to the large impersonal Public school.

That the Indian people need to get involved in Federal policy setting regarding education.

That for the most part Indian communities are not aware of the programs available in

the public school system. That the federal and band-operated schools do not possess or have access to the most basic evaluative and remedial programs.

That parents do not get involved in Parent-Teacher days.

That there is a severe lack of recreational activities for Indian communities. Transportation poses the greatest problem in the taking part of Indian children in extra-curricular activities at school.

That Indian children experience the hardest time in the junior high school level. That they are experiencing the most tumultuous time of their lives personally but receive little service from the guidance and counselling staffs.

That there are no supports being built into either school system to meet the needs of Indian children.

That if the parents were dropouts then the chances of their children doing much better in school are remote.

That the Federal school system has a severe lack of services, testing, special education, remedial (tutoring) support.

There is a lack of community based resources to help children after school hours.

'Concerns expressed'

That their native language is being lost, that this loss seems to be the inevitable price that native people have to pay for success in school.

That there is a lack of jobs to come back to, when the children do go on to higher education. That economic development is not in the hands of communities, so they feel powerless to determine the course of their own future.

That financial resources are not made available to produce services for Junior High School level.

That there exists a lack of reaching out by the school system to the native community. Thus the impression is created that there is no place for reserve level input.

That education workers are not receiving the professional development they require.

That there ought to be a comprehensive career guidance package for Indian children specifically.

That Indian School Board members are unclear as to their role in the School Board system.

That off-reserve Indian families do not receive the educational support payments, they are entitled to, as on-reserve residents are.

That there is no formal link between the Education Worker and Social Counsellor programs.

That there is no ongoing examination of the abilities and aptitudes of individual Indian children. That this would be useful to both the children and their families, in career planning, and to educators of these children. That this would serve to diminish the 'easy way out' syndrome, choosing courses below their ability.

That their culture is beginning to become an unknown quantity or dimension in their lives and communities.

That their children are having such a hard time adjusting to the school system, that they often times don't know how to help.

That there is no 'dropout' alternative program, for those who have dropped out of school and see no alternative in education.

That in-service training of teachers of Indian children is not compulsory.

That there does not exist at the band level programs to help people parent better.

That Indian children are kept after school hours for punishment, and then are forced to hitchhike home, because their transportation has left.

That there is no language alternative for those children who fail in French, primarily because for them it is a third language.

That there is no alternative for students who have suffered severely because of prejudicial treatment by teachers.

Section 5
Conclusion

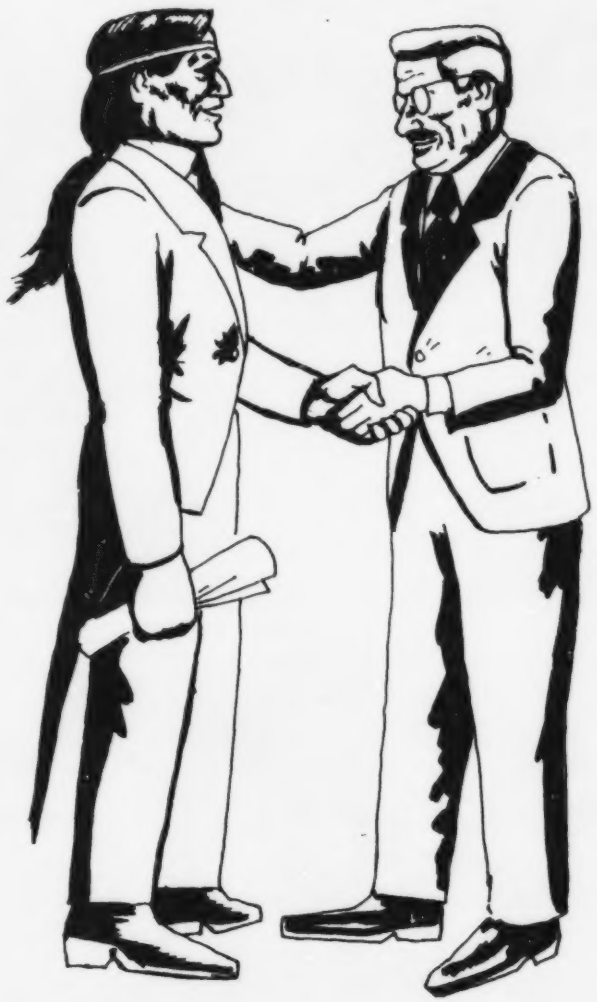
CONCLUSION

It is important that all participants in the education of Indian children - parents, teachers, education committees, school boards, and the Department of Education - share a set of common objectives if they are to establish a common purpose that will enable them to work together in the best interests of the children. Therefore, the following recommendations are made to the Indian community as well as to educators. If the objectives are clear and are shared by all participants, it will be much easier to establish policies, make plans, and initiate programs to deal with specific situations, and to change these policies, plans and programs from time to time as circumstances change.

It is not sufficient for Indian education to consist of simply exposing Indian students to the same curriculum as non-Indian students. There is very little in the current curriculum that deals with the history, the heritage and the contemporary life of the aboriginal peoples of New Brunswick and Canada. In effect, until very recently Indian children attended schools that denied their existence as a people. This situation has been aggravated by the generally negative stereotypes of Indians that are prevalent in society at large. As a result Indian children, knowing they are different but without a sound knowledge of their own history and cultural heritage, go to school with feelings of inferiority for their race and themselves. Fortunately, this problem is being addressed through the Indian Education Workers, who relieve feelings of alienation and anxiety on the part of Indian children attending public schools, and the Indian language and culture classes that are offered in some schools to teach Indian children aspects of their native language and culture.

However, Indian children should not have to rely solely on special supplementary measures to learn about the aboriginal peoples. In addition, it is important that all children have some knowledge of the aboriginal peoples of New Brunswick and Canada. Until very recently, this aspect of our history and cultural mosaic has received very little attention in the general curriculum.

Section 6
Recommendations



NATIVE AWARENESS CLASS

'RECOMMENDATIONS'

The following will be the recommendations put forth by this study group based on the two phases of the study process.

It would appear that recommendations will be specific to 'Program' concerns, 'Staff development' concerns, and 'Communication development' concerns. Some of the points made will be very obvious, others will require a mutual meeting process so that clearer understandings can be reached.

It will be the understanding of this study group that our attempts to study comprehensively the whole area of Indian education were limited by time. This in order to put into place quickly measures that could help address the long-standing concerns of this area. Therefore, this study should not be considered entirely definitive, but rather seed for future growth, and food for thought.

Recommendation 1:
It is recommended that parity between Indian and non-Indian children, in terms of educational achievement be a priority of the Department of Education and school districts.

Recommendation 2:
It is recommended that the Department of Education ensure that Micmac and Maliseet children are acquainted with their history, cultural heritage and native language through supplementary materials and programming.

Recommendation 3:
It is recommended that the general curriculum adequately reflect the history, cultural heritage, and contemporary life of the aboriginal peoples of New Brunswick and Canada.

Recommendation 4:
That a 'transition' program be developed to address the chronic problem of Indian student drop out and underachievement.

It was reocgnized by the Indian people we met that there still is a huge problem of the first year of transition between federal/band operated schools and the public (provincial) school system. Several factors have been outlined in this study and would serve as a building block for a future study group.

Recommendation 5:
That a teacher awareness program be established in order to facilitate the more effective teaching of Indian children, by non-Indian staff. Including modules on the nature of the native community and it's historic link to white communities. Local curriculum could be developed in the areas of history and social studies that could compliment this awareness raising.

Recommendation 6:
That an in-service training team composed of Indian people be established, this team would be made available to all communities and their agencies, to train staff in Native Awareness. That this group be provided resources to make it mobile and readily available.

Recommendation 7:
That a 'parent awareness' training program be developed, that would help Indian parents and families to understand their roles as parents and family members. Included in this package could be topics around the school system and it's role in family and individual development, and Career planning roles for parents in planning for their children's future.

Recommendation 8:
That Indian Content curriculum be further developed, which would fairly reflect the many dimensions of Indian history and the present Indian community. That this be done where possible, in all subject areas, by an established and funded Indian Curriculum Development Committee, made up of Indian people. That the development of curriculum support materials be given to this committee, so that it can oversee their development and implementation.

Recommendation 9:
That the Provincial Government establish a policy statement on Indian Education.

Recommendation 10:
That Provincial School Boards establish a race relations policy, which includes procedures for dealing with cases of a racial nature, i.e. discrimination, or unfair treatment.

Recommendation 11:
That the whole topic area of Indian Education be continuously reviewed and examined, on a two year basis, in order to evaluate progress from formal studies and to consider new directions. That studies and research in Indian Education be funded so that independent views and alternative programs can be available for consideration.

Recommendation 12:
That the Canadian Test of Basic Skills scores be examined to determine discrepancies between scores of Indian and non-Indian children. That the study be done without publication of findings, but be available to Indian and non-Indian educators for programming purposes and follow-up.

Recommendation 13:
That Special Education specialists be made available to schools with Indian children, for individual assessment of children identified as having learning problems. Tests can be carried out. This in order to identify early remediable measures, and to plan for curriculum and teaching methods.

Recommendation 14:
That certified Indian teachers be hired and employed by public schools, in order to facilitate the establishment of role models for Indian children in the school setting. That school board staff jobs other than teaching positions be filled where possible by qualified Indian people.

Recommendation 15:
That libraries and audio-visual resource centers be established at the reserve level. That as an ongoing program in these facilities a 'Reading to the child' program be established.

Recommendation 16:
That Summer Cultural Immersion camps be developed, in order to facilitate the teaching and experience of Indian culture.

Recommendation 17:
That Indian youth be provided opportunities for leadership experiences and development both at the reserve level and away from their communities.

Recommendation 18:
That the philosophy of 'English as a Second Language' become the model for teaching in the Federal or Band operated schools. That French be viewed as a third language in the Federal or Band operated schools.

Recommendation 19:
In recognition of the fact that the drop-out rate for Indian children is highest in the junior high school level, that a guidance services program be developed specifically for Indian children in grade levels seven to nine.

Recommendation 20:
That student services for all Indian students in the on-reserve schools ought to be established; in guidance and counselling, career education, and life skills, in order to facilitate awareness raising of life outside of the reserve community.

Recommendation 21:
That all Indian communities form active education committees, and establish formal links with the public school boards, in order to improve communication and facilitate better understanding.

Recommendation 22:
That local school boards be encouraged to hold some of their regular meetings at the reserve level. That Parent-Teacher nights as well, be transferred on occasion to the

reserves, to help in better understanding by both groups.

Recommendation 23:
That the achievement and success showed by Indian children be recognized by their home communities, in what ever form they feel appropriate.

Recommendation 24:
That the Indian Education Worker program be reviewed and expanded to include all bands, and that a ratio be struck of students/Education Worker. This would allow for better servicing of students and lessen the load on presently overloaded Education Workers.

Section 7
Appendices

APPENDIX 'A'
STUDY GROUP MEMBERSHIP LIST AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

STUDY GROUP MEMBERSHIP

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Dan Horseman
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Province of New Brunswick

Phil Thompson
Social Worker
Department of Social Services, N.B.

Barry Nicholas
Education Liaison
Union of New Brunswick Indians

Committee on Indian Education
Terms of Reference

1. To enquire into the factors associated with the achievement levels of Indian students in schools.
2. To consult with Indian bands, the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, School Boards and other interested parties.
3. To identify courses of action which could be taken or implemented in order to alleviate or remedy problem areas identified by the study.
4. To submit a report with recommendations to the Minister of Education with a copy to the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs by July 30, 1984.

APPENDIX 'B'
STUDY TOUR SCHEDULE

STUDY TOUR - Dates and Times

April 30 - Monday - A.M. Travel to Campbellton
- P.M. Meeting Restigouche Band Hall
- 7:00 P.M. Meeting Eel River Bar Band

May 1 - Tuesday - A.M. Travel to Pabineau Reserve
- P.M. Meeting Pabineau Band Hall

May 2 - Wednesday - A.M. Meeting Eel Ground Band Hall
- P.M. Meeting Burnt Church in Newcastle

May 3 - Thursday - A.M. Meeting Red Bank Band Hall
- P.M. Meeting Big Cove Band Hall

May 9 - Friday - A.M. Meeting Woodstock Band Hall
- P.M. Meeting Tobique in Perth-Andover

May 15 - Tuesday - A.M. Meeting Kingsclear Band Hall
- P.M. Meeting St. Mary's Band Hall

May 16 - Wednesday - Travel to Indian Island
- P.M. Meeting Indian Island Band Hall

May 17 - Thursday - A.M. Meeting Fort Folly Band Hall
- P.M. Meeting Oromocto at Fredericton Motor Inn

June 5 - Tuesday - A.M. Meeting St. Basile in Fredericton

APPENDIX 'C'
Sample race relations policy from 'EQUALITY NOW', a study by the Department of Secretary of State

EDUCATION

The Committee recognizes that Education falls under provincial jurisdiction and is reluctant to make recommendations in this area. However, the vast majority of the briefs received and the presentations made to this Committee as it travelled across Canada looked to Education to make a major contribution to ameliorating race relations and increasing the participation of visible minorities in Canadian society. As a result, the Committee did not feel it could ignore such significant input. Where appropriate, the federal government should link transfer payments to the Provinces to the recommendations in this chapter. This chapter examines the major issues brought to the attention of the Committee, including: the importance of race relations policy at the Board and school level; accommodating school practices to cultural diversity, relations between the home and the school; student leadership programs; methods for responding to racial harassment; assessment of students for placement; the evaluation of textbooks for bias; materials for developing more positive student attitudes; improving teacher education; early childhood education; and post secondary education. Where possible, solutions are directed to the appropriate authorities.

URGE SCHOOL BOARDS TO DEVELOP A RACE RELATIONS POLICY

Sensitivity: Throughout Canada, many school boards, administrators and teachers are trying to create learning environments characterized by sensitivity, tolerance and respect.

Room for Improvement: It appears, however, that this is not true everywhere and that there is need for improvement in the policies and practices of various school boards.

Lack of Programs: Attitudes that are detrimental to the fostering of a multicultural learning environment are a major concern of many school boards. There has been modest success in attempting to reduce racial prejudice by changing attitudes. This problem is compounded by the lack of programs available to those whose racial outlook affects the attitudes of many others.

Behaviour: It is the feeling of the Committee that changing behaviour is much more efficient than attempting to change attitudes. People, when required to change their actions, often will bring their attitudes into line to avoid inconsistency.

Goals and Priorities: It seems obvious that school board policy must reflect the influence of the community of which it is a part. If the board is to change its behaviour, then those responsible for setting community standards must do so as well. Both must agree on a set of goals and priorities that enhance the chances for racial harmony and academic excellence.

Methods for Accommodating Community Participation: The Committee calls attention to a model for participation developed by Keith Sullivan of the Atlantic Institute of Education. He developed a set of guidelines for systematically gathering information on the goals of education for four groups. Acadians, Blacks, non-status Indian and status Indians. His study revealed that the four groups agreed on a set of eight goals, although their priorities were different. Such information can assist schools with different clientele to formulate policies and programs with different emphases.

Other Efforts: The Committee has also learned of actions taken by school boards in Toronto and Vancouver. The Toronto Board of Education called for a report which investigated the manifestation of racism withing the school system, and suggested appropriate action to be taken against it:

> A subcommittee on race relations was established.
>
> The subcommittee developed three issue papers on race relations in the school: one for the system, one for the students and one for the community.

> Consultations were conducted through city-wide meetings, local area meetings, and visits to secondary and elementary schools.

The Vancouver School Board held a series of public meetings in order to ascertain the wishes of the community on race relations:

> A race relations policy was established. The success of the Vancouver model of development can be attributed to support from ethnic groups, an approved policy and guidelines in place, ongoing curriculum and professional development programs: and staff specifically assigned to meet program needs. Each year each school is asked to outline their race relations program.

Both the Toronto and Vancouver programs had strong trustee commitment.

Required Knowledge: Both cities were able to implement a set of complicated policies over time in communities with widely diverse groups and interests. It is the opinion of this Committee that what was achieved in these cases should be made known to others. The promotion and acceptance of cultural differences is a responsibility that is of equal concern to everyone in the community.

RECOMMENDATION:
The Secretary of State should encourage the provincial governments to urge their various school boards to develop and implement a race relations policy.

EXAMINE THE CURRICULUM PRACTICES OF CANADIAN SCHOOL BOARDS

The hidden curriculum is the teaching of social and economic norms and expectations to students. These norms and expectations are so much a part of schooling that they are seldom questioned or consciously examined. They range from the assumption that all students are familiar with Christian heritage to assumptions about the meaning of eye contact, pause length and social distance.

Feelings: Because this is the case, the feelings of cultural minorities who do not place high values on these same aspects are often neglected or overlooked.

Pride in heritage is an important considerations for many visible minorities. The conventional practices of many schools fail to recognize this and tend to consider the culture of some but not others.

Denial of opportunity can result when the hidden curriculum becomes the basis for teaching methods. Verbal praise, used by many teachers as a way to increase participation, may embarrass a student whose culture discourages such behaviour. The student may receive a low grade because of the requirement to participate in class activity.

Climate: The hidden curriculum must be taken into account when considering how to enhance the multicultural climate in the school.

Individual Basis: The Committee encourages all teachers and administrators to remember that there are cultural differences that students should always be treated as individuals.

Resources: It is important that school boards provide school personnel with the resources to conduct periodic appraisals of the overall quality of the school environment and multicultural programs.